

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE
THE ROAD TO REDEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL

By Mayor Gene Winstead

People invest in homes and businesses in communities where they feel safe. If they have children, they also invest in communities that provide good schools and recreation.

The best way we have found to support residential neighborhoods is to provide services that help keep the housing stock in good shape. We do this through building and property maintenance inspections and by providing transitional support services to those in need. Top-value services such as police and fire help people feel safe in their homes, and street maintenance keeps them safe as they travel in the community.

Overall, Bloomington’s housing market has shown some growth over the past decade. Even with the downturn, a look at the 10-year trend shows that Bloomington’s median home value has increased 36 percent from 2001 - 2010. Values peaked in 2007 with greater than 10 percent increases in 2001 and 2002. Growth moderated to 7.8 percent in 2005 and a little more than 1 percent in 2007 before decreases began in 2008. Sales data is reviewed annually, and values are adjusted to reflect market trends.

Changes in retail shopping patterns have a marked impact on our older neighborhood commercial centers, not just in Bloomington or in our neighboring communities, but across the metro, the state and nationwide. This has resulted in vacancies in many retail buildings developed in the 1960s and 1970s.

We have also seen the impact of globalization on Bloomington’s

Revitalization of France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road began in 1998.



manufacturing industry, with companies moving their businesses not just to neighboring communities and other states, but offshore in order to be able to remain competitive with their products.

While much of our commercial property is robust, some locations need assistance to redevelop. The areas of 84th Street and Lyndale Avenue, as well as France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road, have recently been revitalized. The City is also preparing a district plan for the area along American Boulevard between Penn Avenue and I-35W. The City needs to assist in transformations when appropriate, while remaining careful not to favor one business over another in the community. It is a delicate balance that must be achieved in order for the community to continue to thrive.

In Bloomington, reinvestment in streets, facilities and utilities began



in the early 1990s with a Pavement Management Program (PMP), which was designed to rehabilitate our streets through a cost-effective program of sealcoating, overlaying and reconstruction.

Facilities reinvestment began with Fire Station #1 in the early 1990s, along with the water treatment plant and Civic Plaza buildings at the turn of the 21st century. While we have accomplished specific utilities reinvestments, we are now developing the equivalent of the PMP program to rehab and reinvest in utilities infrastructure when it is most cost effective.

In guiding Bloomington to a more sustainable future, the City’s main objectives are to provide the best possible services to the community, while reinvesting in our infrastructure and in older areas that are no longer competitive in today’s market. This is the best way to support long-term property values, while keeping property taxes for City services competitive.

BRIEFING

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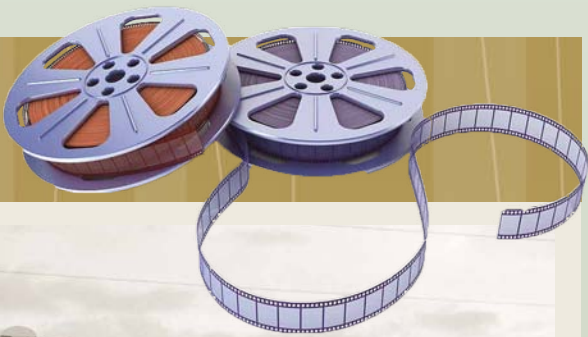
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Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY
AT THE MOVIES AT SOUTHTOWN



In 1964, if you wanted to see Julie Andrews singing about a spoonful of sugar in “Mary Poppins,” Audrey Hepburn trying to lose her cockney accent in “My Fair Lady” or Clint Eastwood playing The Man with No Name in “A Fistful of Dollars,” you need not have gone any further than the Mann Southtown Theatre.

Located on the corner of Penn Avenue and I-494, the Mann Southtown was owned by Marvin Mann, whose brother Ted Mann opened a string of theaters, including the historic Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. Marvin Mann founded Mann Theatres in 1935 and, in the years following, opened theaters throughout the Twin Cities, many of which still exist today. The Southtown Theater, was a grand venue with an outdoor box office. The extra-large marquee spanning the entire front of the building announced current



In 1968, Doris Day and Brian Keith’s family comedy “With Six You Get Eggroll” was a hit at the box offices across the nation, including Bloomington’s own Southtown Theatre.

showings in bright lights. According to *City Page’s* “The Last Picture Show,” the auditorium seated 1,200 in plush rocker chairs and the back eight rows had ashtrays built into the seats. In the ladies’ room, each stall had its own sink and makeup mirror.

Mann’s Southtown Theatre was closed in 1995 and razed soon

thereafter. The area where the theater once stood, now known as the Penn–American District, is still a popular destination, although now people visit there for coffee and bagels and to shop the many retail outlets.

Mann’s theater may be gone, but the Penn–American District continues to shine.